

## **DRAFT Urban Forest Management Plan Fact Sheet**

**Vision for the future:** Seattle’s urban forest is a thriving and sustainable mix of tree species and ages that creates a contiguous and healthy ecosystem that is valued and cared for by the City and all of its citizens as an essential environmental, economic, and community asset.

**Problem statement:** Seattle’s urban forest has significantly declined over the last few decades. Since 1972, Seattle has lost more than half its tree canopy cover, which experts consider the best index for the benefits trees provide urban areas. Currently, only 18% of the city is covered by tree canopy as compared with 40% just 35 years ago. Further, the condition of existing trees is declining from pressures including constrained settings, improper maintenance, and destructive invasive species like ivy.

**Why trees are important:** Trees provide environmental, community, and economic benefits including improving air and water quality, reducing stormwater runoff, increasing property values, protecting wildlife, absorbing global warming pollution, and making our city more attractive.

**Purpose of the plan:** The Urban Forest Management Plan is a 30-year plan intended to guide a broad range of actions that will achieve our vision.

**Plan organization:** Seattle’s Urban Forest Management Plan is organized around the following three management elements:

- Tree Resource: the trees themselves, as individuals or in forest stands
- Management Framework: the approach and tools used to care for trees
- Community Framework: the way residents, businesses and others are engaged in planning and caring for trees

**Goals:** Goals have been established for each of the management elements:

| Tree Resource  | Management Framework  | Community Framework   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maximize canopy cover</li><li>• Maintain trees to promote health and longevity</li><li>• Optimize age and species diversity</li><li>• Maximize ecological service benefits</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement a citywide urban forest management plan</li><li>• Maintain complete and current data about the tree resource to inform policy and planning decisions</li><li>• Facilitate City departmental cooperation and provide decision-makers the information they need to support the plan</li><li>• Provide funding and staffing to implement plan</li><li>• Preserve, restore, enhance and sustain both public and private trees</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhance public awareness of urban forest as community resource</li><li>• Engage the community as urban forest partners</li><li>• Promote citizen/government/business partnerships</li></ul> |

**Canopy cover goals:** A good measure of the overall health and value of an urban forest is the percentage of land within the city that has tree canopy cover. The City’s overall goal is to increase canopy cover by two-thirds over the next 30 years to 30% cover citywide. To reach the citywide target, specific goals have been established for the various land use types in the city, referred to as “Management Units” in the Plan.

| Land Use Category*       | Current Canopy Cover | 30-year Canopy Cover Goal |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Single-Family            | 17.8%                | 31%                       |
| Multi-Family             | 13%                  | 20%                       |
| Commercial/Mixed Use     | 8%                   | 15%                       |
| Downtown                 | 8.6%                 | 12%                       |
| Manufacturing/Industrial | 8%                   | 10%                       |
| Institutional Properties | 15%                  | 20%                       |
| Parks: developed sites   | 19%                  | 25%                       |
| Parks: natural areas     | 64%                  | 80%                       |
| Citywide                 | 18%                  | 30%                       |

\*Seattle’s street trees are included in the land-use types that contain streets and street tree plantings. Current street tree canopy cover is 16% with a canopy cover goal of 24% in 30 years.

**Actions:** A broad range of proposed actions implementing the plan over the long-, mid-, and short-term are presented in the plan in Table 4. Examples of some of the proposed short-term actions include:

- Increase our understanding of the species, ages, and condition of trees,
- Improve maintenance of city-managed trees,
- Improve coordination across city departments that manage trees,
- Create performance measures, and
- Improve incentives and regulations for tree preservation and planting on private property.

### **Organization of the Draft Plan:**

Section 1: Defines the value of the urban forest and the purpose of the UFMP.

Section 2: Defines the extent and condition of Seattle’s urban forest today within the context of the management elements of the urban forest sustainability model.

Section 3: Provides an extensive list of recommended short, mid and long-term actions.

Section 4: Provides specific actions associated with each of Management units identified above.

Section 5: Identifies the process for how the UFMP will be implemented over time.

**Next steps:** The public comment period runs through October 20th. Based on public comment, revisions will be made to plan and plan adoption is anticipated around the end of the year.

Read the draft plan at a community center, library or [www.seattle.gov/environment/trees](http://www.seattle.gov/environment/trees)

Public Meetings Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> Meadowbrook CC, 10517 35th Ave. NE, 11:30- 1:30  
Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> Jefferson CC, 3801 Beacon Ave S, 7pm – 8

Send us your comments: [UFMPcomments@seattle.gov](mailto:UFMPcomments@seattle.gov)  
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